# TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN



# **Submitted to the:**

Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee February, 2003

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#### Introduction

The citizens of Newton frequently rank traffic as one of their chief concerns when rating quality of life issues. Although employment and population have been fairly stable over the past 10 years, there is a perception that traffic continues to increase. In addition to the frustration of not being able to get from place to place efficiently, Newton's residents feel increasingly exposed to other undesirable effects of large traffic volumes, including safety hazards, air pollution, increased noise levels, and an overall diminution of the quality of life.

In 2001, the Newton Framework Plan outlined four key values and approaches in addressing transportation needs of the future. These four areas are:

#### • Mobility

The mobility needs of all members of the community need to be addressed. This includes the 30% of the population that does not drive. By promoting alternatives to auto trips, efficiency of travel can be promoted to serve mobility. Mobility is to be attained while avoiding adverse impacts on the City's quality of life.

#### • Supporting an Array of Modes

A full range of travel modes is supported, including walking, cycling, driving, and taking transit. Growth of public transportation is encouraged by proposing that incentives be created by businesses for their employees to take public transportation and enhancing information on routes and schedules. Other modalities are encouraged, such as carpooling, bicycling, and walking.

#### • Linking to Transportation

Access to transportation must be maintained. This can be achieved by ensuring parking facilities to transit nodes and support for feeder buses with appropriately designed routes and stops. Maintenance of the health and economic vitality of our villages is paramount.

# • Planning and Organizational Structure

Coordination among multiple city and regional agencies is needed for effective transportation planning. Expertise is necessary from both the overall planning and transportation perspective to serve the mobility needs of the population while maintaining quality of life and taking full advantage of regional resources.

Based on the Framework Plan, the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) is exploring various types of options to maintain and enhance transportation in the City of Newton. During the summer and fall of 2002, the CPAC transportation group drafted a set of goals and objectives on developing a working transportation plan for Newton's future.

# Goals and Objectives of the CPAC Transportation Policy Plan

As the City of Newton is mandated to prepare a Comprehensive Plan by both its Charter and by Massachusetts statute, the CPAC proposes the following goals and objectives in creating specific ideas about actions that will improve transportation options for Newton over the next 25 years:

#### Goals:

- To maintain an acceptable level of safety on all roads in all neighborhoods, for all users
- To reduce the potential for increased auto trips and to create options to use of automobiles
- To promote walkable streets which connect neighborhoods
- To enhance public transit which connects clusters of activity
- To follow design guidelines that encourage pedestrian-oriented, vital urban environments
- To achieve transportation mobility and maintain travel times while avoiding adverse impacts on quality of life
- To encourage mobility for both auto and non-auto modes, consistent with community character and historic resources
- To limit locally generated trip growth on non-arterial streets
- To utilize techniques of traffic calming and streetscape improvements to lessen auto impacts

# Objectives:

- Maintain an acceptable level of safety on all roads in Newton and for all users, including non-vehicular users.
- Strengthen character of nodal centers (villages) to encourage transit and promote mixed-use pedestrian oriented development that will encourage transit use. Adopt transportation policies keeping with Newton's historic character and the capacities of its infrastructure.
- Improve auto circulation and intersection management without stimulating auto demand and strengthen arterial put-through to discourage use of Newton's side streets
- Reduce the volume of future automobile traffic by promoting design guidelines in land use for new and existing developments.
- Advocate for convenient alternative transportation and for enhanced bus and rail options.
- Improve commuter and business parking opportunities in villages and neighborhoods.
- Reduce traffic congestion related to Newton's schools by creating a more efficient school transportation system and promoting walking and bicycle use as alternatives to car use.

Four broad steps have emerged as ways to approach the issue of transportation planning for Newton as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. The basic philosophy of these steps is to preserve and enhance the village nodal character of our City and preserve the residential nature of our neighborhoods. The four methods are: 1) Integrating and managing land use in concordance with transportation, 2) Acting to encourage a different split in modal choice, 3) Increasing the capacity of our transportation infrastructure, and 4) Strengthening the City's transportation planning capacity.

#### **Current Overview**

On initial inspection, Newton, the "Garden City," would seem to have excellent resources in transportation. Since a major source of travel through and from Newton is to the Boston inner core, two major high capacity auto routes have been built. In the 1930's, as part of Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration, the historic Boston-Worcester turnpike, now known as Route 9, was widened to four lanes with many grade separations and given the name "Spanish War Veterans Highway." In the 1960's, the Massachusetts Turnpike extension was built, with three auto lanes in each direction, cutting through Newton's villages of Auburndale, West Newton, Newtonville, and Newton Corner. There are two entrances/exist, one in West Newton and the other in Newton Corner. Since the 1970's, Needham Street, an important route in the southwest part of Newton, was widened to three lanes, providing a center two-way turning or storage lane for cars. In the early 1950's, Route 128 (now Interstate 95) created a 3-lane circumferential route just outside of Boston and on Newton's western border.

In terms of public transit, Newton has had an east-west rail line, the Boston and Worcester railroad, now used for commuter trains, dating back to 1834. In 1959, the Riverside light rail line was electrified and opened on the tracks of the former Boston and Albany steam railroad, servicing the central parts of the City and providing rail service to Park Street in Boston. Several MBTA bus routes traverse Newton, including the #52 and #59 (running a north-south route) and the #60 and #57, going into Boston from Chestnut Hill and Newton Corner, respectively. North of the Massachusetts Turnpike, four bus routes traverse Newton, and there are express buses that use the Turnpike for access into Boston. Finally, Newton has its own intra-city bus service, the Nexxus, which currently runs two routes. In terms of long distance travel, Newton's Riverside station is a stop for buses that go to New York City, Albany, and other places.

However, on further inspection, it becomes evident that in spite of its transportation resources, travel and transit is becoming more difficult in Newton. On many of Newton's roads, off-peak traffic volumes of today are the same as "rush-hour" traffic volumes from about 20 years ago. In many cases, automobile travel on Saturday afternoons has become as congested as work-related traffic during weekdays. Increasing car travel mainly from Boston's western suburbs has resulted in traffic volumes of approximately 150,000 vehicles along Route 128/95, 100,000 vehicles per day on the Massachusetts Turnpike, and 50,000 vehicles per day along Route 9. On Route 9, large regional developments, including the Chestnut Hill Mall and the Atrium Mall, have stimulated travel demand on this important arterial. Needham Street carries at least 30,000 cars per day. Its multiple curb cuts create safety conflicts as through-traffic interacts with traffic from the many businesses that have become established along the corridor. One of the most difficult and unsafe intersections in the Commonwealth exists at the exit and entrance ramps to the Massachusetts Turnpike in Newton Corner. Meanwhile, the major north-south routes through Newton, such as Chestnut, Walnut, and Centre Streets, have become increasingly clogged with traffic, with backups at many key intersections.

There has been increasing pressure to widen such intersections, which would occur at the expense of pedestrians and historic village character. In some cases, such as the widening of Centre Street in Newton Center and of Galen Street in Newton Corner, the results of these measures to increase automobile capacity have been greeted with mixed feelings. The net result for

these areas has led to faster traffic and these communities have less of a pedestrian feel. Finally, parking concerns continue to plague many of Newton's villages and neighborhoods. There is a perceived lack of parking to provide access to retail establishments in villages, and commuter parking has spilled into Newton's residential neighborhoods.

The transit system in Newton, while convenient for some, fails in crucial areas. Many of the bus routes are infrequent and underutilized. Buses tend not to run in the early morning and evening hours, or their schedules are so infrequent as to make them impractical. The intra-city Nexxus system has suffered from virtual abandonment from the ridership, and its routes have been changed frequently so that most of Newton's citizens are not familiar with its course. The commuter rail service skips a key transit and business node, Newton Corner, and its service is infrequent at other stops. There are limited opportunities for reverse-commuting from Boston, and there are often service gaps of over one hour. Access to the stations is inconvenient for most, impossible for the physically-challenged, and unpleasant for all, as the tracks are down an embankment and adjacent to the Turnpike. The Green Line light rail service from Riverside is often slow and congested. Many transit riders on the Riverside trains stand for 40-45 minutes in and out of Boston, jostling with other passengers at stops where people try to get on and off. Although commuter parking is adequate at Riverside and Woodland stations, there are pressures for parking at most other locations along the commuter and light rail lines in Newton. A lack of parking for commuters translates into unwelcome parking in residential neighborhoods or into village retail parking spaces being taken by all-day commuters. Finally, although access to transit is possible for some of Newton's residents, many neighborhoods have minimal or no such access. These include virtually the entire south side of Newton, Newton Upper Falls, and most of Newton near Commonwealth Avenue. Because of budgetary constraints, there is increasing pressure to reduce or curtail existing transit services.

Overall, there has been an increased reliance on motorized transportation over walking or using transit. Many of Newton's villages, which once had neighborhood schools, hardware stores, grocers, and other useful amenities, no longer have such services. Instead, Newton's residents must drive outside of their village to access these amenities. Car ownership has increased to the point where in some families, cars outnumber drivers. Because of increased traffic, it becomes increasingly unpleasant and unsafe to walk in some areas of Newton. There is little pedestrian access to most of the businesses along Route 9 and Needham Street, for example. In other areas of the city, such as Newton Corner and more recently Newton Centre, roadway widenings and "improvements" have made the environment less hospitable to pedestrians, who now must face larger expanses of asphalt and faster traffic when negotiating their travel. A major source of early morning and afternoon traffic are the activities related to taking children to school and after-school activities. Whereas these were once pedestrian functions, most children now rely on a system of chauffering by auto.

Interestingly, although the perception of increased traffic volumes is universal among many of Newton's residents, this phenomenon is difficult to explain by demographics usually associated with traffic generation. For example, the number of households in Newton has only grown 5.9% from 1990 to 2000 (from 29,455 to 31,201), the number of jobs in Newton has actually fallen 7% (from 44,793 in 1990 to 41,637 in 2000), and the overall population has only minimally increased 1.5% (from 82,585 in 1990 to 83,829 in 2000). However, perhaps reflecting the trend of an

increased number of women in the workforce, the number of employed persons has increased 11% from 1990 to 2000 (from 40,544 to 45,018) and the number of vehicles has increased 5.9% (from 29,455 in 1990 to 31,201 in 2000). Also, the number of households reporting 3 or more cars has grown to 4,067. The number of people who carpool to work has decreased by 16.9% since 1990 and the number of people who walk to work has decreased by 9.3%. Overall, 73% of people drive to work alone, which is less than 1% of an increase over 1990 data. Why then does it feel like there are so many more cars on the roads of Newton?

Since the increase in traffic volumes cannot be explained only by trips to work, it is likely that increased mid-day traffic is a result of non-work related trips. The loss of key services from many of our village centers may be a reason for this, as many villages have lost their grocery store, their hardware store, their local bookstore, among other services. With these services unavailable locally, many of our residents are forced to drive farther away to obtain routine goods. Also, with more cars on the roads, many people perceive that walking is less appealing and perhaps more dangerous, and would rather drive even to nearby locations. It is increasingly rare to see children walk to school or to other activities, as the incredible traffic congestion that is generated by driving children to school activities will attest. Finally, with population growth, job growth, and traffic volumes increasing markedly in our western suburbs, it is likely that a large part of our increased traffic volumes are due to people passing through Newton on their way to other locations.

# **Predicting Future Transportation Needs**

It is difficult to predict how future trends in population, job growth, and economics may influence land use and transportation change for Newton for the future. However, the CPAC's Transportation Policy Plan will address the following questions, as outlined in July, 2002:

- 1) How much and what kinds of land use changes may influence transportation over the next 25 years?
  - Changes in the regional economy and an increasing shortage of available sites seem likely to slow growth in jobs and households in Newton and surrounding communities over the coming decades.
  - These basic sources of travel demand seem likely to grow by no more than 15% in either Newton or surrounding communities over the next 25 years, and their growth may be substantially lower than that.
- 2) How much and what kinds of changes in transportation demand within and across Newton may we expect over the next 25 years, both in the number of trips and the division of those trips among transport modes?
  - Both US Census trends and Metropolitan Planning Organization projections support expectations of less growth in peak hour auto traffic than the growth in underlying jobs and households, as use of transit, walking, and working at home all increase.
  - Although there does remain concern over potential large-scale development in abutting communities, the future expectation is that last decade's growth in off-peak trips, largely non-work ones, is likely to be tempered as the demographic base changes for

that growth, and as auto reliance slows.

- 3) What are the problems and opportunities that those two sets of expected changes will pose?
  - Some current problems may become more serious in the future, most notably commuter parking. These parking issues must be addressed in the short term.
  - However, the anticipated rates of change in auto traffic should be ones that can be addressed in ways that are consistent with making our transportation facilities a positive element in the City's quality of life, and not intrusive disruptions to it.

# A Way to Approach Transportation Planning

Four broad steps have emerged as ways to approach the issue of transportation planning for Newton as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. The basic philosophy of these steps is to preserve and enhance the village nodal character of our City as well as the residential quality of our neighborhoods.

- 1) Managing land use in better concordance with transportation planning
  - Well-integrated mixing of land use in new development and in re-use of existing centers (i.e. apartments over stores) should be facilitated and encouraged as a method of auto-trip reduction.
  - Business and commuter parking must be better woven into the existing village patterns so that it is more adequate and less disruptive for the businesses and neighborhoods. Consideration should be given for permit parking restrictions.
  - Site design guidance needs to assure that vehicular access between abutting land uses and major arterials is better managed than at the present.
  - Systematic limits on traffic impacts onto nearby streets need to be made as much a part of the usual rules of development as lot area and floor area controls are now.
  - Given growth expectations, there is no traffic-based need for broadly imposing more restrictive limits on development in Newton than those presently applied.
- 2) Acting to encourage a different split in modal choice.
  - Development and transportation guidelines need to give priority to facilitating non-auto access. This includes easy access to transit, excellent pedestrian and bicycle connections, and incentives for trip management efforts by enterprises to support transit use, car and van pools, off-peak travel, etc.
  - Promoting and enhancing sustainable public transit deserves high priority for attention and funding.
- 3) Increasing the capacity of our transportation infrastructure.
  - The most critical auto travel capacity needs are in the larger-scale State-managed elements. It is critical that the City continues pressing for improvements to those

- elements consistent with demand in order to avoid traffic increasingly clogging our neighborhood streets.
- It is crucial for the City to press for public transportation enhancements to stimulate increased use of these systems, including regional public transportation that will deflect pass-through traffic from Newton's streets.
- Widening of local streets, even if arterials, should be discouraged as a means of addressing capacity needs.
- Given the actions being suggested, the necessary roadway capacity improvement in the local arterial system (whose elements should be identified in future studies) can be achieved through limited actions, such as intersection improvements.
- Careful design should assure that any roadway capacity improvements do not result in inducing more auto traffic to pass through Newton.
- In contrast with auto capacity increases, our pedestrian, bicycle, and public transport provisions are in need of substantial enhancements, suggesting a redirection of emphasis in funding and advocacy efforts.
- 4) Strengthening the City's transportation planning and management capacity
  - Create a transportation center in City government.
  - Invest in transportation planning staff, perhaps creatively financed, and provide necessary authority to optimize management of planned projects.
  - Support this investment with necessary software and ordinances.

In general, especially during the past 10 years, there has been a nationwide emphasis on promoting modes of transportation that are an alternative to single-use automobile trips. As demonstrated in many other cities, there have been major infrastructure improvements in rail and bus corridors so as to promote the use of transit. Also, bicycle use has increased, with Massachusetts Highway Department standards now requiring a bicycle lane to be included on most roadway improvement projects. Although the Transportation Policy Plan strives to balance the need for sensible roadway improvements, a major focus is to promote alternate modes of transportation while strengthening the economic and community vitality found in our village centers.

Newton is fortunate in that it already consists of a number of village centers which are nodes of dense mixed-use development usually oriented around transit. Whereas many other places in our country have developed in a geographically dispersed pattern that makes transit provision difficult, Newton and its villages represents a prime opportunity for wise and efficient transit improvements. Provision of better transit is crucial especially for individuals who may not be able to drive but who can use transit to access public and private services.

As such, the Transportation Policy Plan supports initiatives to strengthen the nodal character of our mixed-use village centers, while aiming to avoid further dispersion of growth which is suitable only for auto-oriented uses. By defining the boundaries of mixed-use centers, which in most cases would correlate to the natural boundaries of Newton's villages, the Transportation Policy Plan is designed to support a mix of uses and promote a lively pedestrian environment that is conducive to transit use. This system would maintain and preserve current land use and zoning patterns for residential neighborhoods so as to avoid "over-densification." Also, it would allow for

preservation of open space outside of Newton's villages. The net result would be a strengthened nodal system of villages in Newton, marked by lively mixed-use centers which are pedestrian and transit-friendly, and would potentiate economic growth while creating significant benefit for town residents, businesses, property owners, employers, and employees. In addition, new "transit oriented" development can be envisioned, especially along the Needham Street corridor which abuts an unused rail line.

The general objectives of the Transportation Policy Plan emphasize mitigation that reduces the impact of automobile travel by promoting alternate modes of travel and by reducing dependency on the automobile as the only method of getting from place to place. As such, the Transportation Policy Plan aims to move away from strategies not wanted by Newton's residents, such as plans to widen roads and intersections. However, some minor "tweaking" of intersections may be acceptable for purposes of travel time and safety. The transportation plan will support transit initiatives, ranging from improved bus and rail service, to enhanced pedestrian access, to more efficient school public transportation.

# **Newton's Transportation Policy Plan**

# **Strategies for the Future:**

The Transportation Policy Plan for Newton strives to maintain a careful balance by addressing the need for maintaining sensible automobile and roadway access while encouraging alternate modes of transportation and promoting measures to preserve Newton's unique and historic character. The Plan recognizes the role of the region's roadway system in providing vehicular access through Newton and to and from Boston's inner core as well as to other surrounding towns. The Plan recognizes the impacts that geographically dispersed patterns of growth can have on the provision and utilization of transit. Ultimately, the Transportation Policy Plan favors establishing incentives to locate development and redevelopment near efficient and convenient public transportation amenities. This will promote the effectiveness of providing those types of transit services. Therefore, the Transportation Policy Plan will emphasize mitigation that reduces automobile travel by promoting alternate modes and reducing dependency on the automobile as the sole method of travel from place to place. A multifaceted approach must be taken, one that meets existing and future travel demands for moving people and goods, sensible land use, and promoting alternative modes of transportation.

Newton has two major sources of automobile trip generation. One of the sources of traffic are the residents of Newton who travel either to work or from place to place within Newton and outside of Newton. The other major source of traffic are the residents of surrounding communities who are traveling to or through Newton to their employment, who are traveling to access amenities within Newton, or who are passing through Newton for other reasons. For some of these travelers, the reason they utilize automobiles for travel is because their varied destinations are not served by convenient public transportation and the alternatives to private car travel are inadequate. Ways to reduce car travel in Newton include making walking and non-auto travel more convenient and pleasant, doing more to discourage the use of private cars, and by providing better alternatives.

By fostering and maintaining pleasant walkable neighborhoods, and by designing new development so that it is more in keeping with the traditional character of Newton, we could expect to see benefits in the form of reduced traffic congestion. Simple design elements can be implemented to allow more errands to be done on foot, by bicycle, or by using public transit. These elements include providing wider and better sidewalks, interconnecting streets and development projects rather than building cul-de-sacs, promoting street-level retail in the form of neighborhood stores, and supplying convenient and pleasant transit stops.

A basic premise of the Newton Transportation Plan is that future road-system improvements will be minimal. Increasing roadway capacity will only encourage more people to drive, which will in turn create more traffic jams on existing roadways and choke points. A strategy of "no roadway widening" will not result in substantive changes in the amount of growth that Newton can accommodate. However, it will have an impact on the form that future growth takes in Newton by concentrating development in areas where it will have the best access to transit while having the least impact on traffic. The typical pattern of scattered development that we have seen thus far in Newton has had a cumulative impact of causing worsening congestion on our roadways, even though each individual project may have seemed to have little traffic impact on its own. Future development patterns will need to respect the relationship between land use, design, and transportation planning.

A number of measures can be taken to mitigate traffic problems when new development is planned. First, improvements in the public transportation system must be an integral part of the approval process for all developments. If new development were within a 5 minute walk of a bus stop, and if the bus waiting time is reduced to about 10 minutes, many more people would use the bus to access the new development. If any further development is proposed in key Newton corridors, such as along Route 9 or Route 16 (Washington and Watertown Streets), it should not occur unless the bus system offers frequent and reliable service from that development to other centers and transit nodes, such as rail stops. More riders can be attracted to transit by providing functional and attractive bus shelters along the route. Employer incentive programs should be implemented to encourage use of transit, such as making employers purchase MBTA passes for all employees. Disincentives to providing free parking should be utilized, such as charging higher city fees on all automobile garage facilities.

In corridors where rail transit is presently available, or where it is feasible (such as the Needham Street corridor), similar strategies can be implemented to encourage use of transit and decrease automobile reliance. For example, the two existing rail lines traverse most of Newton's villages. By concentrating development in centers that have stores, offices, sidewalks, and transit, traffic congestion will be mitigated and reduced. New development in the villages cannot be approved unless the developer agrees to implement strategies to encourage transit use, as outlined above. The Needham Street corridor provides a unique opportunity to create "transit-oriented development," as the adjacent rail line can be rehabilitated at a fairly small cost and provide rapid and reliable rail service within walking distance of the entire corridor.

In some cases, by special permit, developers may be allotted a minimal number of parking spaces for automobiles if those structures are incorporated within the site plan and there is an accompanying transit incentive plan in place. Design guidelines must be followed to insure that

any new parking facilities are incorporated into the traditional street fabric of Newton's villages. Parking structures should not be placed fronting main pedestrian routes or in areas where there is street-level retail use. In other cases, curb cuts into parking should be kept at a minimum and the parking facility should be shielded by landscaping and be placed at the rear of the associated business. When a structured parking deck is proposed, the street level use of that structure should be retail or offices, such that a pleasant and safe pedestrian environment is maintained. Shared parking facilities between adjacent businesses are encouraged, and allowances will be made for commercial interests which share parking. Wherever it is appropriate, on-street parking will exist in front of new developments, thereby matching the existing pattern of Newton's villages.

Although it is recognized that bicycle travel will only constitute a small number of trips in Newton, the use of bicycles can be encouraged by providing clearly identified routes along appropriate roadways. Also, by interconnecting bicycle paths and by finding routes that are safe in navigating through Newton, more people may use bicycles for intra-city travel. Convenient facilities for bicycles, such as secure bicycle racks, benches, and shelters should be provided at strategic locations, such as in each village center, at City Hall and the Library, at recreational areas, and at transit stops. For east-west travel, possible bicycle routes include Commonwealth Avenue and Watertown Street. For north-south routes, possible bicycle routes would include the newly reconstructed Needham Street, continuing onto Centre Street. Bicycle lanes should be clearly marked on routes identified as bicycle routes, and a map of such routes should be developed.

By implementing design guidelines for new development, promoting alternative forms of transportation, and adopting a "no widening" strategy for our roads, we can go a long way toward reducing the number of cars on Newton's roadways. We can also save a lot of money by avoiding auto-oriented changes, such as intersection widening and inappropriately high parking requirements that encourage using cars. That money can then be used to further expand alternative transportation options and to encourage people to use them. The more we do to make people want to leave their cars behind when they travel in Newton, the further we will go toward preserving Newton's quality of life and character.

#### **Objectives and Recommendations:**

The following objectives and recommendations are not intended as mandates to the City of Newton, or to any other person, agency, organization, or public or quasi-public agency. They are not intended to contradict any existing policies or laws set forth by the City of Newton or by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

# Objective 1

Maintain an acceptable level of safety on all roads in Newton and for all users, including non-vehicular users.

**Objective 1.1:** Development and redevelopment shall not degrade safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, or motor vehicle operators or passengers.

- Analysis of the potential safety impacts of development and redevelopment shall be required on all regional and local road links, at all intersections, where the project is expected to increase traffic by more than 25 or more trips during the project's peak hour.
- All access and egress locations for development and redevelopment shall meet access
  management standards and policies for driveway spacing and separation from the nearest
  intersection. Development shall be restricted to access and egress on shared driveways or lower
  volume roads, where feasible and legally possible and when deemed appropriate by City
  authorities
- Human made objects, such as signage, utility poles, and lighting to service development must be located to minimize visual obstruction, including glare. New utility services must be placed underground where deemed feasible by City authorities.
- Site planning for development shall minimize impacts on the adjacent road system and shall adequately and safely accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Development and redevelopment shall provide for pedestrian connections on the property of the applicant to allow for possible connections with adjoining properties.
- The width of driveway and curb cut openings to serve development and redevelopment shall not exceed Massachusetts Highway Department design standards, and may be deemed smaller by City planning and safety authorities.
- Trip generation data sources other than those from national surveys may be utilized by City planning authorities.
- Elimination of curb cuts is encouraged.
- Development and redevelopment should avoid increasing through vehicular traffic within residential neighborhoods.

Strengthen character of nodal centers (villages) to encourage transit and promote mixed-use pedestrian oriented development that will encourage transit use. Adopt transportation policies keeping with Newton's historic character and the capacities of its infrastructure.

**Objective 2.1:** To consider the feasibility and legality of limiting the expansion of roadways that traverse Newton's villages and residential areas.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Seek enabling legislation and amend the City Ordinance to reflect standards that require that no roads in Newton shall be expanded in lane number past their current status.
- Seek enabling legislation and amend the City Ordinance to reflect standards that require that except where reconstructing an existing intersection containing turn lanes, no turning lanes be constructed in Newton.
- Seek enabling legislation and amend the City Ordinance to reflect standards that require all "neighborhood" and "village" roads be designed and maintained to promote vehicle speeds of not more than 20 mph.

**Objective 2.2:** To create infrastructure consistent with the character of Newton's villages.

- Amend any existing zoning and land use rules to encourage the interconnection of existing and proposed streets in keeping with Newton's traditional pattern of blocks and interconnected streets.
- Amend any existing zoning and land use rules to disallow cul-de-sacs and dead-ends in new
  developments, except allow waivers on a special case-by-case basis where environmental
  limitations preclude interconnections.
- Adopt and implement a policy concerning maintenance of existing roads consistent with this Transportation Policy Plan.
- Amend any existing zoning and land use rules to provide that new streets are strategically placed to provide missing connections and block size reductions.
- Consult with neighborhood groups and associations concerning possible interconnections between existing streets.
- Investigate, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Highway Department, the possibility of the state's granting to the City of Newton control over the character of "improvements" for roads that traverse Newton but that are owned by the state (i.e., Needham Street, Route 9).

Improve auto circulation and intersection management without stimulating auto demand and strengthen arterial put-through to discourage use of Newton's side streets

**Objective 3.1:** To establish Newton-specific context-sensitive design standards for automobile and roadway capacity that are based on Newton's historic character and not on conventional capacity standards.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Consider the feasibility of amending zoning and land use rules so that decisions on new or expanded projects do not encourage growth of capacity through roadway expansion. Standards for new or expanded projects would be based on vehicle trips per peak hour and vehicle trips per day with capacities established in keeping with Newton's historic character.
- Consider the feasibility of amending level of service (LOS) requirements for intersections consistent with maintaining Newton's historic character.
- Study the feasibility of using trip generation and transit mitigation measures as a basis for new
  development, which would be based on circumstances unique to the area of the proposed new
  development.
- Amend any existing zoning to establish maximum criteria for the number of parking spaces for mixed use development and allow shared parking.
- Consider the use of existing parking areas to facilitate the use of alternative modes of transportation.

**Objective 3.2:** To regulate the speed of automobile travel by establishing speed limits appropriate to pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods, and by implementing traffic-calming techniques consistent with Newton's character.

- Take steps to prepare appropriate engineering reports to qualify for permission to establish a speed limit of 20 mph for Newton's residential and village streets.
- Institute a variety of traffic-calming measures to slow the speed of traffic and to create more pedestrian-friendly streets, such as converting wide one-way routes to two-way streets, adding on-street parking, creating "bump-outs" at major pedestrian crossings, reducing street pavement width to add sidewalk capacity or to add bicycle lanes, create medians and islands in 4-lane roads at pedestrian crossings.

Reduce the volume of future automobile traffic by promoting design guidelines in land use for new and existing development which is consistent with Newton's character.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Create design guidelines for new and expanded development in accordance with the Design Concepts for Growth as described elsewhere in this document.
- No additional travel lanes shall be allowed for new developments or redevelopment and roadway and intersection widening, traffic signalization, and turn restrictions are discouraged. Any roadway changes proposed as part of development must be consistent with Newton's historic character and not degrade it's villages and neighborhoods.
- All new roadway modifications shall require appropriate pedestrian accommodations. Sufficient right-of-way shall be provided along the frontage of new developments to meet the expected needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Development and redevelopment, including transportation improvements, should replace existing overhead utility lines with underground service.
- Consider the legality and feasibility of zoning and land use rules to require new development to undergo an analysis based on trip generation and peak traffic volumes.
- Developments shall provide a Level of Service analysis and provide for mitigation for project impacts on adjacent roadways where traffic is expected to increase related to the project.
- Mitigation from new development shall be proposed to maintain "no-build" conditions. In lieu of mitigation of traffic impacts, the Planning Department may allow fair-share payment of funds to the City's transportation planning efforts to promote regional transportation improvements.
- Amend the zoning rules to allow for further mixed-use development and higher density residential development in identified parts of the City of Newton, and in areas designated as village centers and corridors of growth.
- Transportation mitigation shall be consistent with federal and state acts and plans, including the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and successor transportation acts and amendments, the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the American with Disabilities Act, and other regional plans.

#### **Objective 5**

Advocate for convenient alternative transportation and for enhanced bus and rail options. Improve commuter and business parking opportunities in villages and neighborhoods.

**Objective 5.1:** To advocate for expansion and improvement of the MBTA bus system.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Institute operational changes that increase efficiency and ridership. These include reduced bus headways (to add ridership capacity and frequency), increased service in evenings, establishing bus/rail connections with consolidated schedules, and providing adequate bus shelters.
- Plan and implement route modifications and expansions that increase the bus system's effective service area and its efficiency. See "Specific Transit Projects" section.
- Increase utilization of bus system by strategies such as employer-incentive programs (such as MBTA passes for employees), complementary transit fares paid by village restaurants, encourage businesses to set up "Commuter Rewards" programs

**Objective 5.2:** To advocate for expansion and improvement of the MBTA rail system.

#### **Recommendations:**

- On the commuter line, institute operational changes that increase efficiency and ridership. These include reduced headways during weekdays and weekends, increased "reverse-commuting" service during rush hours, increased evening service, consolidating rail to bus schedules. Therefore, the commuter line would function more as a "rapid transit" line from Newton to Riverside.
- On the commuter line, institute dual platform service (eastbound and westbound), provide adequate shelters, provide safe and easy means to access stations.
- On the commuter line, add stations at Riverside and at Newton Corner, as per "Specific Transit Projects" section.
- On the Green Line, expand service to Needham Street and Newton Upper Falls, as per "Specific Transit Projects" section and elsewhere, providing two additional stations in Newton, one at Needham Street and the other at Newton Upper Falls.
- Investigate the feasibility of improved parking options along rail commuter lines. For the commuter rail, this may include study of Turnpike air rights. For the Green Line, this may include parking improvements at Riverside and at Woodland stations.

**Objective 5.3:** To improve and expand Newton's bicycle path system

- Study the feasibility of bicycle lanes on east-west and north-south roadways in Newton. For east-west roads, this would include Washington Street Watertown Street and the entire route of Commonwealth Avenue. For north-south routes, this would include the Needham Street Centre Street corridor.
- Study the feasibility of bikepath shortcuts via public and city-owned property, adding interconnections to major bicycle routes.
- Create interconnections between bicycle paths and neighborhoods, centers, and villages.
- Clearly delineate bicycle routes both on site and in maps and planning documents.
- Provide bicycle racks at strategic locations, such as villages, centers, and transit nodes.
- Consider a system of free or shared bicycle fleets at key locations.

**Objective 5.4:** Improve the pedestrian environment in Newton to make our neighborhoods, villages, centers, and neighborhoods more walkable.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Expand the pedestrian system found in existing neighborhoods to support the concept of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers based on walkable neighborhoods.
- Establish an interconnected and continuous system of sidewalks, especially in new developments and to connect new developments to existing neighborhoods.
- Identify and implement a safe and convenient system of pedestrian interconnections between neighborhoods and developments, especially between adjacent new developments, and provide direct pedestrian access to transit, to encourage pedestrian usage and discourage use of the automobile.
- Implement an aggressive program to improve access for persons with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Objective 5.5:** Reduce or offset the expected increase in motor vehicle trips, reduce dependency on automobiles, and encourage alternative modes of transportation and create incentives for their use.

- Design information packets that promote a coordinated system of alternative transportation modes (walking, bicycle use, bus and rail transit) for residents of Newton. Information-based systems that assist travelers in making efficient travel decisions regarding travel mode and time of travel should be developed.
- Urge businesses and other members of the private sector to encourage use of non-auto transportation modes, and create information systems to achieve that effect. These techniques may include employee carpooling, flexible work hours, and transit incentives. Trips generated from public transit shall not be included in trip generation for purposes of determining development requirements.
- Amend zoning and land use rules to create incentives and rewards for the use of alternative modes of transport, and create disincentives to automobile use. An example of incentives would be a reduction of parking requirements for new developments. Developments located near existing transit, such as a rail or bus stop, may be granted trip reduction credits and offset trip generation requirements.
- Explore the possibility of new funding schemes to encourage transit use. An example would be a reduced rate monthly or annual pass for use of transit for Newton residents.
- Encourage development and redevelopment that allows for site traffic to travel conveniently and safely to adjacent properties without traveling on a public road (such as through shared parking or through rear access driveways).
- Drive-through services as part of development should be avoided in order to decrease emissions from idling engines and traffic conflicts.
- Development and redevelopment shall accommodate the needs of pedestrians and other nonautomobile users in site planning. Where appropriate, safe walking and bicycle links shall be created to establish an interconnected walking system between commercial and residential neighborhoods and other compatible uses to provide an alternative to automobile travel on major roads.

- The maximum parking allowed for development and redevelopment shall be no more than the minimum number of spaces required by zoning, and the City Planning Department may justify a smaller number of spaces via a parking analysis.
- Enforce laws to better manage parking, to maintain access to businesses in village centers and prevent incursions of commuter parking into residential neighborhoods. Consider the feasibility and legality of a system of escalating fines for repeat offenders. Provide the necessary technology to achieve this end.

Reduce traffic congestion related to Newton's schools by creating a more efficient school transportation system and promoting walking and bicycle use as alternatives to car use.

- Create a complete system of sidewalk connections around schools in a 1/2 mile radius to facilitate safe travel by foot and bicycle and reduce the number of drop-offs by automobile.
- Study the feasibility of implementing additional traffic-calming measures along and near schools in order to reduce the speed of traffic and increase safety for pedestrians.
- Encourage the School Committee to reduce auto-dependency and congestion related to school based activities by reviewing school bus policies for ways to increase ridership.
- Support proposals to allow all students along a route of a school bus to utilize the bus, in addition to students who live over one mile away from their school.
- Promote use of the school bus system as an alternative to the automobile, and consider expanding service with more routes through more neighborhoods.
- Engage in a process to create a "Safe Routes to School" program to enhance the safety of walking and bicycling to school, thereby reducing auto dependency and congestion.
- Promote use of either car-pooling or shared walking responsibilities for parents with younger children to decrease rides to school.

# **Newton's Transportation Policy Plan**

#### **Specific Transportation Projects:**

The CPAC Transportation Policy Plan proposes a number of specific methods to implement the City of Newton's transportation plan based on the goals and objectives outlined above. These fall into three specific categories:

- I. Improve automobile roadway capacity without roadway expansion
- II. Increase transit use to improve modal split and reduce auto trip generation
  - A. Rail transit improvements
  - B. Bus transit improvements
  - C. Commuter parking solutions
- III. Use land use techniques to foster walking and transit and reduce auto trips

It should be noted that all of the options proposed below are in draft form and subject to further evaluation and input by the public and by the general community. These are initial ideas for proposals that are preliminary and which deserve further study.

# I. Improve automobile roadway capacity

Automobile trips in Newton are not likely to increase much more than their current levels because the population of Newton is stable at about 80-85,000, with about 30,000 automobile drivers. With the number of women in the workforce at a plateau, it is expected that the number of people traveling to work will be stable. Since the build out of surrounding towns is mostly complete, there will not be a high increase in trip generation through Newton. The number of automobiles in Newton is not likely to increase, as it is already at a maximum of 2-3 autos per a 2-3 person driving family unit.

Therefore, it will be possible to improve automobile capacity without roadway widenings or new roadway projects. Efforts to improve automobile capacity must be weighed against the potential of stimulating induced travel in cars and thereby increasing overall traffic. Increasing capacity at intersections can only be done if it does not destroy pedestrian qualities of Newton's villages or the residential ambiance of its neighborhoods. Traffic should be channeled in such a way that traffic does not increase on side streets. It is the opinion of the CPAC that increased capacity of only a few major routes and a few major intersections should be considered, while preserving the current widths and intersections on most routes in Newton.

# 1) Major North-South Routes:

- a) Route 95/128: Will have 4-th lane added from Randolph to Newton. This will accommodate at least 15,000 more auto trips in each direction per day and may reduce some trips through Newton from the Westwood/Needham area to the Waltham/Burlington area. More trips may be shunted to Routes 9 and the Mass. Pike. A new exit on Kendrick Street in Needham may increase auto trips along Nahanton and Winchester Streets, requiring mitigation such as traffic calming techniques and preserving current roadway width to discourage cut-through traffic.
- b) Grove St.-Lexington St.: Capacity improvements are considered to service the MBTA station at Riverside, as well as a proposed intermodal facility related to the commuter rail light rail connection at Riverside/Auburndale. No major roadway widenings or intersection widenings would be desirable along the rest of the route.
- c) Washington St.-Waltham/Watertown Sts.: Major roadway reconstruction is now being completed from Rt. 128 to Mass Pike. This may remove some traffic from side streets along the corridor. No major roadway widenings or intersection widenings would be desirable otherwise. Recommend study of Washington St. Mass. Pike interchange to implement improvements.
- d) Chestnut St. Waltham St.: No major roadway widenings or intersection widenings advised for corridor.
- e) Needham St./Winchester St. Walnut St.: Reconstruction of Needham St. is planned, with intersection improvements and widening of section near Rt. 9. Further widenings of Winchester St., Walnut St., and Centre St. not advised.

- f) Newton Corner Mass Pike Centre St. Galen St. intersection: reconfiguration of this intersection is advised. Suggest two-directional traffic circulation pattern at Newton Corner with new roadway crossing Turnpike.
- g) Dedham St./Parker St. Centre St.: No major widenings or intersection improvements anticipated, except the Mass Pike interchange, as above.
- h) Hammond Pond Parkway Waverly Ave.: No major widenings/intersection improvements advised. Consider removal of curve from Hammond Pond Parkway, as well as creation of planted median to improve safety/aesthetics. Improve Rt. 9 and Hammond Street intersection.

#### 2) East-West Routes

- a) Mass Pike: By improving intersections at Newton Corner (creating bidirectional flow along either side of Mass Pike and a through-street connecting Centre Street north and south of the Turnpike) and West Newton, there will be better traffic flow and safety at these intersections. This may deflect some north-south Newton traffic onto the Mass Pike and perhaps onto Washington Street (shortcut to Rt. 128 and Rt. 9).
- b) Rt. 9: Route 9 becomes congested because of its two traffic signals in Newton. These signals are located at Langley Rd. and the Elliot/Woodward Streets intersection. Eliminating a left turn from Langley Rd. and building an overpass solution for Elliot/Woodward (putting Rt. 9 under this intersection similar to the Parker St. overpass) will improve operational efficiency of this major east-west road, and may deflect some through traffic from Newton (Beacon St. and Commonwealth Ave.) and decrease use of connecting north-south routes.

#### II. Transit Improvements

Transportation options can be greatly enhanced in Newton by improving the access, frequency, and convenience of the present rail and bus system. In addition, there are several new eastwest and north-south transit options that can relieve traffic choke points and open the way for mixed-use pedestrian friendly development that has been otherwise constrained by transportation access problems.

By integrating Newton's transit with regional transit operations in the surrounding towns, pass through trips in Newton may be reduced, and the transit service may be more sustainable in terms of ridership and cost. Current regional programs, such as the Program for Mass Transportation (PMT) proposed under the direction of the MBTA and CTPS (Central Transportation Planning Staff) present a unique opportunity to collaborate on transit enhancements throughout the metropolitan area. As part of a transit enhancement program, options will be explored to improve access and parking to existing rail stations, as well as new ones. By making transit inexpensive, readily available, and convenient, more of Newton's residents will see this as a viable option for their transportation needs.

1) Improve existing commuter and light rail ridership

- a) Operate high frequency Riverside-South Station commuter service via Yawkey and Back Bay stations.
- b) Create a new commuter rail station at Riverside and an intermodal transfer facility between commuter rail and the Green line "D" train.
- c) Operate new or improved commuter rail service from Newton stations on the commuter rail line.
- d) Expand reverse commuting options by providing at least three "reverse direction" trips during each peak period.
- e) Add Newton Corner as an intermodal stop on the commuter line, intersecting with bus routes, with commuter parking on air rights over the Mass Pike.

# 2) Improve access and parking to existing stations

- a) Study new Riverside intermodal commuter rail light rail connection for options for parking.
- b) Explore feasibility for Turnpike air rights for parking structures at Newton Corner (Centre St.) and West Newton (Washington St.).
- c) New facilities at Riverside and Woodland for parking
- d) Underground garage at existing Newton Centre surface parking lot, with 50:50 parkland and small retail on surface level where current parking lot exists. This would increase parking while also increasing parkland, while adding to the economic and community vitality of the village center (similar to Post Office Square in Boston).

# 3) Green Line light rail (D-line) extension to Newton Upper Falls and Needham

- a) Line would be created on old right-of-way from Newton Highlands to Newton Upper Falls depot, then into Needham. (see attached "Light Rail to Needham" document).
- b) Dual-track, electrified line, extending to Longwood Medical Area and then to Copley.
- c) Quiet, unobtrusive, environmentally green, no property takings.
- d) Possibility of a Needham Street stop, which would serve mixed-use area between new Avalon Bay apartment complex and Elliot Street neighborhood.
- e) Major traffic mitigation proposal to relieve traffic along Needham Street, as well as traffic to adjacent Needham Industrial Park, with 7-10 million square feet of commercial real estate along corridor.
- f) Opens area to further economic expansion, now stunted by traffic and access limitations (daily volumes on Rt 9 = 50 K, Rt 128 = 100 K, and Needham St = 30-40K). This expansion would add to city tax rolls, relieving residential property tax rates and allowing more funding for other city services, schools, etc.
- g) Provides opportunity to construct an active, new village of Newton, with parks, walkable streets, and viable small scale businesses.

#### 4) Enhanced bus transit opportunities

- a) Consider Rt. 128 bus service.
- b) Needham to Cambridge bus route (via Needham St, Walnut St., Washington St. to Watertown, then to Cambridge).

- c) Waltham to West Roxbury bus route (via Dedham, Winchester, Walnut, Washington, River Streets to Moody Street).
- d) Rt. 9 Wellesley to Longwood Medical Area bus route (Huntington Ave., Longwood Ave., Brookline Ave. loop).
- e) Extend trackless trolley #71 from Watertown to Newton Corner loop.
- f) Allow access to school buses for all students along route of bus, not just those 1 or 1.5 miles away from their school.

#### 5) General transit recommendations

- a) Integrate Newton transit with regional transit operations: work with MBTA and CTPS Program for Mass Transportation to first perform feasibility studies and then implement various proposals outlined above. Many of the above proposals are already on the PMT short –list of possibilities for study.
- b) Implement land use improvements to benefit walkable, compact, village oriented communities (as outlined in land use section).
- c) Improve access and ridership so that transit is feasible and so that service frequency can be increased, especially at peak ridership times.
- d) Create, with MBTA, "Ride Newton" pass. Pass purchase can be offered as an optional surcharge on property tax bills and would be good for unlimited trips within Newton during a calendar month. Employers would receive tax advantages in purchasing passes for employees. Pass program can be offered at reduced rates for senior citizens and students. Additional passes purchased by families would be at reduced rates. Suggested price of monthly pass would be same as MBTA bus pass (\$21) for adults. All valid alternate MBTA passes would be honored on Newton routes (ie, bus, subway, combo, commuter passes).
- e) At select key locations, construct high quality shelters and stations. Consider commercial suppliers of transit stops which provide "free" installation of a stop, along with maintenance, in return for advertising. This program is currently being implemented by the MBTA.

# III. Use Land Use Techniques to mitigate against increased traffic

It is recognized that compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development, as we have in many of Newton's villages, stimulates non-auto travel choices. People who have access to commercial centers with wide sidewalks, street trees, storefront windows, and a small scale of building design are more likely to walk or use transit to access these centers. Newton is fortunate to have several such nodal areas of density, most of which are accessible by rail transit.

In devising a transportation plan for Newton, it is important to understand the interrelationship between the shape, design, and interrelationship between buildings and the desirability to use a particular mode of transportation. Based on the way buildings are designed and arranged, and on the uses within a building, a certain type of development may stimulate auto-generated over transit-oriented demand. As such, the CPAC transportation group advocates for land uses and building designs that promote transit use and minimize auto trip generation. This may be achieved by adopting the following guidelines.

- 1) Promote mixed-use development
  - in designated nodal development (Newton villages)
  - in linear corridors (Needham St., Washington St., Route 9)
- 2) Consider establishing zoning overlay areas for identified transit hubs and village centers:
  - a) Adopt smart growth codes to parallel existing development and zoning codes.
  - b) Encourage mixed use communities and buildings.
  - c) Zone by building type, not by use (flexible zoning, responds better to market demands).
- 3) Convert strip commercial into mixed-use development.
  - a) Use scales appropriate to community (2-4 story in village, 5-6 story along Massachusetts Turnpike).
  - b) Retrofit certain areas into walkable mixed-use communities by appropriately scaled infill projects.
  - c) Create balance between jobs, retail, and housing
- 4) Compact building design
  - a) Use design guidelines to achieve pleasant urban environments (design review)
    - 1) Ensure access to open space and transit
    - 2) Reduce visible off-street surface parking, especially in front of buildings or fronting pedestrian-friendly main streets
    - 3) Match building scale to street type in zoning/permit approval
    - 4) Ensure sense of privacy and sense of ownership
  - b) Use density bonuses to encourage increased floor-area-ratios in nodal centers
  - c) Support regional planning to encourage compact communities
- 5) Create a range of housing choices to encourage transit use
  - a) Enact inclusionary zoning ordinance for new housing.
  - b) Revise zoning to permit a wider variety of housing types in certain areas.
  - c) Plan and zone for affordable housing
- 6) Create walkable communities
  - a) Retrofit existing streets and sidewalks to promote walkable communities
  - b) Concentrate services near jobs, homes, transit
  - c) Require building design that makes commercial areas more walkable
  - d) Establish design standards for streets/sidewalks that insure safety/mobility for pedestrians and conform to ADA standards
  - e) Utilize traffic calming techniques (street trees, on-street parking, stop signs, etc)

- f) Connect walkways, parking lots, developments create easy route to transit and villages
- 7) Foster distinctive communities with strong sense of place
  - a) Tax credits for reuse of architecturally significant buildings
  - b) Plant trees and create active open spaces
  - c) Create special improvement districts to establish a sense of place (i.e., Main Streets program)
  - d) Define communities with visual cues (gateways, plantings, lighting)
  - e) Support guidelines so streets, buildings, and public spaces work together, providing opportunities for community interaction
- 8) Preserve open space
  - a) Use Transferable Development Rights and other legal mechanisms to conserve private lands
  - b) Use financing tools to facilitate open space acquisition
  - c) Adapt a green infrastructure plan create a network of greenways
  - d) Partner with non-governmental organizations to protect/acquire land
- 9) Direct development towards existing communities
  - a) Establish a "brownfields" (vacant parcel) program consider use of split rate taxes to encourage development of blighted parcels or certain city-owned land
  - b) Locate civic and public buildings in existing community centers
  - c) Economic incentives for businesses to locate in certain areas (cost-pricing strategies)
- 10) Adapt land-use requirements to accessibility to transportation choices
  - a) Provide incentives for multimodal transportation systems with supportive land use
    - Modify roadway level of service standards in areas served by transit
    - Plan networks of neighborhood-scaled streets with high connectivity, short blocks
    - Connect transportation nodes to one another
    - Zone for concentrated multi-use activity near transit service
  - b) Require sidewalks and address parking needs
  - c) Collaborate with employers to provide incentives to decrease roadway congestion
  - d) Adjust existing transit services to take advantage of mixed-use developments
- 11) Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
  - a) Provide financial incentives to aid transit-oriented development
    - Expedite plan and permit approval
    - Encourage political support
    - Use point-based system to evaluate projects

- b) Remove parking from development equation by utilizing public-private partnerships for community parking and on-street parking
- c) Display zoning/design goals in pictoral fashion to better illustrate what is allowed
- d) Maximize value of city-owned property

#### Conclusion

The Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee's Transportation Policy Plan for Newton presents a coordinated transportation program for the City of Newton that is to be implemented over the next several years. Many people believe that increased traffic in our city has led to an increase in travel times to get from one end of our city to the other. This decrease in mobility has led to an overall diminution in the quality of life for many of our residents. Paradoxically, even in spite of increased automobile ownership, our citizens are finding it more of a challenge to get from place to place.

The Transportation Policy Plan for Newton has considered the important relationship between land use, development decisions, and transportation systems. The Plan will achieve the broad goal of maintaining and improving automobile capacity on our roadways without expensive roadway expansions. For any new development or transportation project, there will be mitigation of any increases in traffic by providing for enhanced walkable environments and public transportation systems. Accomplishing these goals will require a level of commitment and cooperation from our communities, our businesses and developers, our public officials, our city and regional agencies, and our financing sources.

#### References:

Newton's Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee Transportation Proposals, Presented at public meeting October 24, 2002.

Cape Cod Commission Regional Policy Plan, Section 4.1, Transportation, Effective April 29, 2002.

"Managing Transportation," Nantucket Comprehensive Community Plan, 2001.